

**DELAWARE COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 22, 2008**

Members Present: Ennis, Lardizzone, Carroll, Corsa, Endres, Evans, Harden, Kitson, Smith and Thompson

Members Excused: Lank, Newstadt, Spitzfaden, Timberman and Wasson

Staff Present: Davila and Quinlan

Guests: Ron Sarg (MOAA), Bill McMullen (AF Sergeants Association), Bettylou Evans and Gary Morris (American Legion), Rich Robichand (DELVETS)

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to our Nations Flag.

Chairman Ennis opened the meeting by stating that we had a good year last year, we had a positive approach under our former chairman and got a lot of things done. The former Veterans Home Steering Committee has now been replaced by the Advisory Committee. He emphasized the importance of the Advisory Committee and urged everyone to attend the meetings. The meetings are the first Wednesday of every month at 1:00 pm. Chairman Ennis provided the new Commission Committee assignments and stated they would be effective immediately.

**MOTION BY HARDEN TO ACCEPT DECEMBER COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES,
SECONDED BY EVANS, MOTION CARRIED.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Mr. Davila reported that construction has begun at the Northern Cemetery. In addition, an agreement was made with the Family Advisory Cemetery Committee (FACC) in reference to the bronze tree and bench markers and the final templates have been sent to Matthews Bronze to begin manufacturing.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Commissioner Carroll referred to a handout that highlighted construction at the Wilmington VAMC. He also mentioned that the VA annual congressional briefing will be held today. Commissioner Carroll reported on personnel changes at VAMC and provided updates on the Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs). The VA has requested that all service organizations furnish Karen Rynkowski with dates of their annual conventions. The Delaware Veterans Home fund is currently at \$103,031.77 and the balance of the Friends of Delaware Veterans Home fund is \$486,575.59.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Commissioner Thompson reported that we have not yet heard back from the legislative body and we are in a holding pattern right now. Commissioner Carroll mentioned that legislation had been introduced to designate I-95, from the Maryland line to the PA line, as the Purple Heart Trail.

PERSONNEL

Commissioner Lardizzone reported that a Conservation Technician II was hired at the Northern Cemetery about two weeks ago.

Ms Quinlan handed out a Veterans Home report and discussion followed.

ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS

Corsa (VVA) – Reported that they are planning a remembrance ceremony in Sussex County.

Harden (WAVES) – Announced that she is still looking for a location to buy organizational flags.

Endres (40 & 8) – Reported that the Smyrna Voyager has been re-chartered.

Thompson (MCL) – The mid-winter Conference will be held in Falls Church, VA, February 7-8, 2008.

Carroll (MOPH) – Reported that the annual march on Capitol Hill is scheduled for February 15, 2008. The National Commander will be testifying in front of the Joint Veterans Affairs Committee. The Department will sponsor a visitation at the VA Salute to Hospitalized Veterans the week of February 10-16, 2008. He also reported that there has been federal legislation (HR 2303) introduced for issuance of the Purple Heart Forever stamp. He mentioned the recent investigation of nonprofit organizations and discussion followed.

Smith (AMVETS) – He recently attended a Department meeting and was pleased with the way it was conducted.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Morris reported that the possibility of a bus route to the new Veterans Home is being discussed and looks very positive. Commissioner Carroll made inquiries about the nature of the service and Mr. Morris provided information concerning the logistics involved in setting up the bus service.

Commissioner Carroll outlined the details of the Delaware Veterans Home Advisory Committee meeting he attended. The Commissioners discussed issues brought up pertaining to the Veterans Home that were proposed and considered at the Advisory Committee meeting.

MOTION BY LARDIZZONE TO RETAIN THE FULL DOMICILIARY AT THE VETERANS HOME AS IT PRESENTLY IS, SECONDED BY ENDRES, MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY LARDIZZONE TO RECOMMEND THAT THE RATE OF DOMICILIARY CARE AT THE VETERANS HOME BE REDUCED FROM \$130 TO \$80 A DAY AND BE REVIEWED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS, SECONDED BY ENDRES, MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Ennis asked for thoughts about the Steering Committee name being changed to the Delaware Veterans Home Operational Advisory Committee. No one expressed an objection.

Commissioner Harden provided information about the upcoming Delaware Women Veterans Symposium II & Expo scheduled for Saturday, April 26, 2008.

Ms Quinlan announced that there will be a Residents Council meeting on Wednesday, January 23, 2008, 10:00 am. The residents requested that as many Commissioners as possible attend.

Mr. Davila mentioned that the VA is planning a grand opening of the CBOCs somewhere between June 30 and July 3, 2008. It is still in the planning stage and he will let everyone know when he gets more information.

ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION

Mr. Sarg reported that MOAA will be conducting an annual fundraiser on February 22, 2008, at the UNO Chicago Grill in Dover to award four \$1000 scholarships to graduating Kent County high school seniors who have also completed the JROTC program.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: FEBRUARY 26, 2008 (10:00 AM)

LOCATION: Robbins Bldg, 802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100
Dover, DE

ADJOURNED